



Medications at Home: Vitamin D (Ergocalciferol, Cholecalciferol)

The neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) team celebrates with you as your baby goes home! After graduation from the NICU, your baby will need medication to stay well.

Why does my baby need this medication?

- Vitamin D helps to prevent and treat low levels of vitamin D in the blood.
- This medication prevents and treats bone diseases like rickets (bone softening).
- This medication helps the body absorb calcium and phosphorus so that bones grow strong.
- This medication helps keep your baby's nerves, muscles, and immune system healthy.

How, how much, and when is this medication given to my baby?

- Vitamin D is given by mouth.
- The amount of medicine to give has been carefully calculated based on your baby's weight and needed response from the medicine. Do not change the dosage without talking to your baby's provider.
- Dose Instructions: _____

What are possible side effects?

- None (at the proper dose)

What if my baby misses a dose or spits up the medication?

- Give the missed dose as soon as you remember it. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and stick to the regular medication schedule.
- Never give a double dose.
- Call your baby's provider if your baby misses two or more doses or spits up the medication.
- Do not give with a multivitamin unless specifically recommended by your baby's provider. Many multivitamins also have vitamin D in them. In some instances, giving both is needed, but always ask before giving both.

Important Medication Safety Tips

- Only give your baby medicines prescribed by your baby's provider. Do not share prescription medicines with other children or adults.
- Check with your baby's provider before giving your baby any over-the-counter medicines.
- Keep all medicines out of reach of children, closed tightly in the bottles or containers they came in, and with the labels of directions given by the pharmacy.
- Give vitamin D exactly as directed by your baby's provider.
 - Never stop vitamin D or give more or less than prescribed without first talking with your baby's provider. Too little may not be enough to help, and too much may cause harm. In case of overdose, immediately call the Poison Control Center at 800.222.1222. If you cannot wake your baby or he/she has stopped breathing, start cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and call your local emergency medical services or 911 right away.
 - Store vitamin D at room temperature, away from excess heat and damp areas like the bathroom.
- Always use the five *rights* when giving medication to your baby:
 - Right baby (if other children are in the home)
 - Right medication
 - Right amount (always measure the dose with the syringe or dropper provided by the pharmacy, not a common household teaspoon)
 - Right time
 - Right way (exactly as prescribed and directed by your baby's provider).



The above information is to help you better understand your baby's care. Always follow the instructions given by your baby's provider and pharmacist. It's always OK to ask questions if you have concerns about your baby.

Online Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org

HealthFinder.gov
www.healthfinder.gov

Institute for Safe Medication Practices
www.ismp.org/consumers

Kids Health
www.kidshealth.org

Medline Plus: Drug Information
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds

U.S. Food and Drug Administration
www.fda.gov